2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

they do not use fur sleeping bags as do the Russians and some of the Tungus, nor do they sleep dressed in double fur clothing like the Chukchee and Koryak. They simply cover their naked shoulders with a hare skin blanket. There is a Russian proverb which says: Keep the feet warm, the head cold. The Yakut follow the opposite custom. When traveling in winter with Yakut drivers it was noted that they lay with heads and not their feet near the campfire. Usually one of the men stayed awake to tend the fire, but it sometimes happened that everyone fell asleep, the fire was extinguished, the blankets were lifted by the wind, exposing the naked backs of the sleepers to the frost which was covered with rime,—and they continued to sleep.

Fig. 46. Costume of Poor Yakut Children.

Pottery

In our discussion of dwellings we noted the Yakut use of clay to cover their earth huts and to rub their stoves. For these purposes they use an inferior clay called *cuor*, meaning simply, earth, soil. Clay for pottery is called *tuoi*. It cannot be said that Yakut pottery reaches great perfection, since the ceramic art is still in a low stage of development. However, clay pots are made everywhere in Yakutsk Province, except in its northern districts. The Yakut of the Verkhoyansk and Kolymsk districts and the northern part of the Viliuisk District neither manufacture nor use pottery.

Pottery-making requires the joint labor of men and women, the former find the suitable clay and the latter construct the pots. Pottery clay is found in the valleys of mountain rivers, usually forming a layer two meters thick under the black surface soil. That the Yakut brought the art of pottery-making with them from their original home in the south may be proven by the potsherds excavated in the Baikal region. Neither the Buryat, the present inhabitants of that region, nor the Mongols generally, ever made pottery. The potter's wheel and such refinements of the art as polishing, glazing, or painting, are all unknown to the Yakut, so that their pottery-making did not extend beyond the confines of the rudimentary technique.

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

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The methods pursued by the Yakut[1] are fairly simple (Fig. 47*a–g*). The clay, *tuoi*, is crushed on a flat stone with a wooden mallet called *ötüyä* (Fig. 47). Then the powdered clay is placed in a wooden trough where it is mixed with warm water, milk or *sorat*, a kind of sour milk. Often a powder made of fragments of old pottery is added to the mixture. The paste is beaten with the wooden mallet until it becomes soft and plastic. Then a clay disc is moulded and placed on a flat board; the walls of the vessel are built up by adding strips of clay until the desired size is attained. To give the pot a regular rounded form, willow rings,

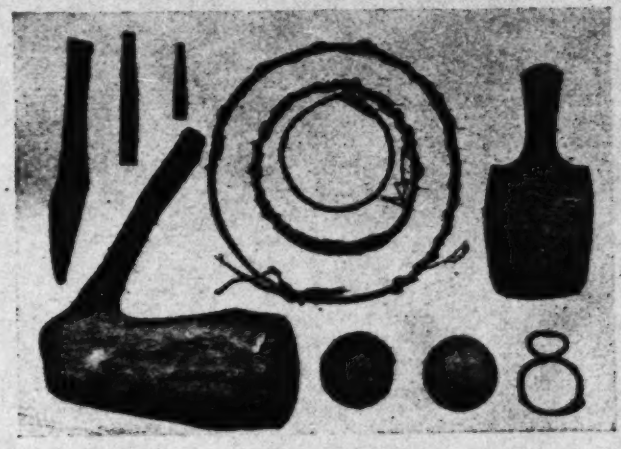

Fig. 47 *a–g* (70-8589, 9242, 8592*b*, 8592, 9245, 8591, 9243, 9244, 8775). Pottery Making Implements. *a*, Wooden mallet; *b*, Willow rings; *c*, Two wooden balls; *d*, Wooden paddle; *e*, A wooden knife for cutting clay; *f*, Two wooden stamps for ornamentation; *g*, An iron cleaner for cooking pottery (See Fig. 48).

called *kūös-itä* (Fig. 47*b*) are placed around the bottom and the upper rim while the walls are being built up. They are smoothed and made of uniform thickness with a wooden ball (*kūös oxsor mäs*) (Fig. 47*c*) held inside the pot in the left hand while a wooden paddle (*kūös oxsor loppaky*) is applied on the outside (Fig. 47*d*). Fig. 47*e* shows a wooden knife for cutting clay; Fig. 47*f*, two wooden stamps for ornamentation; Fig. 47*g* an iron cook pot cleaner (see also Fig. 48).

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The method of firing is quite primitive. The vessel is placed on charcoal from the hearth and when red hot, cold water, sometimes mixed with milk or sour milk, is poured over it; then it is heated a second

1 [ie. for making pottery -- ANALYST]

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

time. Yakut pots are easily broken and remain porous until milk has been repeatedly boiled in them. The rims, the upper part, and sometimes the whole pot, are ornamented by impressions made with wooden stamps (*kūōs oyūlūr mas*, wood for ornamenting pottery). These design motives have special names; for instance, Fig. 53*d*, is called *tyñyrachtach torduya;* Fig. 53*g* is *bīltägir*.

Though pottery-making was known to the Yakut since neolithic times it never developed into a real art. This may be explained partly by their early acquaintance with the manufacture of metals, particularly iron, which among the Yakut preceded that of bronze. Clay vessels came to be used more frequently as containers for liquids than as cooking utensils. However, fluids cannot be kept in them a long time without spoiling. After cooking the pot is cleaned with an iron scraper called *kāsïr* (Fig. 48) and dried.

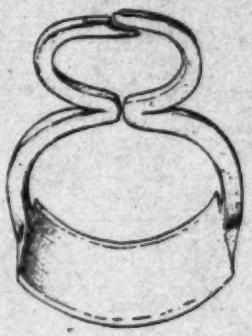

Fig. 48 (70-8775). An Iron Scraper for Clay Cooking Pots.

The forms of clay vessels vary; the commonest is an egg-like shape, the flat bottom of which is much smaller than the mouth. As may be seen from the illustration (Fig. 49*a–d*) the tea pots and charcoal stoves (Fig. 49*a*, *c*) to keep them warm are made after the Russian fashion. The size ranges from small cups for children to vessels capable of holding four to six gallons.

Additional evidence of the antiquity of the industry among the Yakut appears in the Turkic names for pottery-making implements and vessels. A clay pot is called *kūōs;* a metal kettle is called *salyr*. Even in places where, as in the northern districts of Yakut Province, no pottery is made at present, the word *kūōs* is well known and used as a linear measure. In terms of linear measure one may say, "one pot," "two pots," "pot of a walker, horse, or ox rider." For *kūōs* (pot) the Yakut understand a distance of from seven to twelve versts (from 6.6 to 8 miles). Translating *kūōs* in terms of time, it means a period during which a pot with meat for an average family is cooked. In Afghanistan *kūōs* is used as a linear measure of about eighteen miles. Böhtlingk[1] distinguishes the word *kūōs* as a unit of time from *kōs* as a linear measure as does Pekarsky in his Yakut-Russian dictionary, where he interprets *kōs* as a term for a day's journey from one camping place to another.

The Yakut do not know how to wash clay or to temper it, using it as it is found, with all its impurities, quartz and other non-plastic materials

[1] Böhtlingk, *ibid.*

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Fig. 49 (70-8894, 8641, 8661, 8586). Pottery Forms. *a* and *c* are forms copied from Russian utensils.

Fig. 50 *a-c* (70-9250, 8641, 9248). Pottery Ornamentation.

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

which constitute a natural tempering medium. For this reason Yakut clay lacks uniformity, its quality depending on its incidental composition. 323

In Fig. 49*b* is a tripod clay vessel (*üs ataxtar buor bolčik*) for sour milk. The legs show the tendency to reproduce horse's hoofs as in the wooden kumiss vessels. The decoration of the rim consists of three parallel grooves circling the vessel made by a double notched wooden stamp (*küös oyulür mas*). 531 323

Another form has four rows of ornamental designs around the rim (Fig. 49*d*). In Fig. 51*a–d* may be seen two wooden stamps with which the vessel was decorated. Each design motive forms a single line on the pot. The cross design forms the fourth row and the same motive is put in another position in the first row. This is also true of the second and third rows, where they are sloped in the opposite direction. Two other stamps are carved on the opposite sides of the same stick (Fig. 51*b–c*).

Fig. 51 (70-8593*ab*). Wooden Stamps for decorating Yakut Pottery.

A small clay pot is decorated with repetitions of five design units (Fig. 50*a*). The circles on the rim are like those on the lower row, only smaller. Each of the three inner rows of decoration represents a repetition of the same figure. The figures of the middle rows are so stamped that each design is placed opposite the intervals between designs of the upper and lower rows.

Fig. 50*b* represents a small clay pot with a lid. The decoration consists of circles, discs, and figures resembling the ends of keys with barbs. These motives are enlarged in Fig. 53. Four circles forming a cross are placed below the interval between each second disc.

A small clay pot ornamented with circles and the so-called backbone designs on projecting ridges is shown in Fig. 50*c*. Both designs are also shown enlarged in Fig. 53. The interior of a Yakut winter dwelling illustrated in Fig. 52 shows clay pots on the hearth and a woman smoothing a new pot with a paddle. She holds a wooden ball inside the pot with her left hand to support the wall while the outside is smoothed. Some Yakut potters of the environs of the City of Yakutsk have learned from Russian potters both to add salt to the paste, making the pottery stronger, and also the art of glazing. The handles on the vessels illustrated in Fig. 49*a, c* as well as the spout to the tea pot (Fig. 49*a*) are made in imitation of Russian pottery. 177 323 531

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

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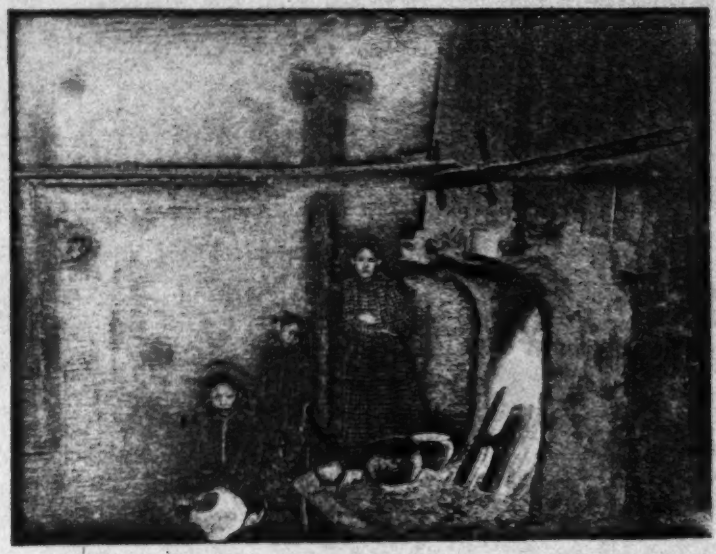

Fig. 52. Interior of a Yakut Winter Dwelling. A potter is at work near the hearth.

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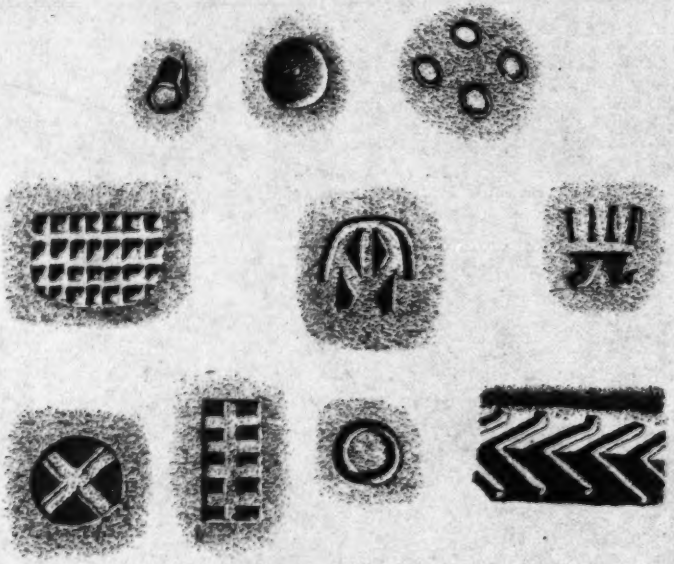

Fig. 53 (70-9249, 9250, 9248). Types of Pottery Designs.

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

At the market at Yakutsk I have seen white clay pottery made with the potter's wheel. These wares were made by Russians. I could not learn, however, the origin of the white clay.

The Yakut of the northern districts of Yakut Province, Verkhoyansk and Kolymsk, of the lower course of the Lena, and of the villages on the Olenek, Khatanga, and Anabara rivers, neither use pottery nor have any knowledge of its manufacture, but utilize iron and copper utensils. It is curious that they do not know that their southern relatives from whom they separated about two hundred fifty years ago still use and make pottery. This is surprising since there are passages in folk tales referring to clay pots.

The fate of Yakut pottery demonstrates the possible differences in the sequence of development of culture. Among civilized nations the ceramic art has been perfected simultaneously with the development in the production and manufacture of metals. With the Yakut, as with other Siberian tribes, the opposite occurred. For instance, the present Kamchadal and Koryak do not know that their forefathers made pottery, but archaeological excavations[1] by the author on Kamchatka Peninsula and within the territory of the Koryak brought to light ancient specimens of their pottery. Compared with the Koryak and Kamchadal, however, the Yakut are relatively much more advanced in culture having, in the past, been affiliated with other civilized Turkic nations of southwestern Asia.

Metals

At present the Yakut are acquainted with iron, copper, bronze, silver, gold, tin, and lead. All these metals, except tin and lead, still retain their old Turkic names: iron, *timir;* copper, *altan*, red copper, *jas altan*, yellow copper; brass, *ūōs altan* or *ūrūñ altan;* bronze, *čyañ* (after Sieroszevski); silver, *kömüs* or *ürüñ kömüs* (white *kömus*); gold, *kysyl kömüs* (red silver); tin, *xolholyun;* lead, *sibinās*, *xolholyun* is a Mongol word and *sibinas* a Russian word (*svinetz*).

Iron. Iron (*timir*) is historically and economically the most important metal among the Yakut who were acquainted with the reduction of iron ores and iron manufacture before reaching their present abode. There are no data to prove that they worked iron before they learned the manufacture and use of copper, bronze, and other metals. In central Siberia, on the Yenisei and Angara rivers, ancient sites have been discovered on which remains of the late neolithic period were found

[1] Jochelson, Waldemar, Archaeological Investigations in Kamchatka (*Carnegie Institution of Washington*, No. 388, Washington 1928), 69–76.

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

consider this to be a rather inartistic imitation of the carvings of the neighboring tribes.

The only attempt at realistic reproduction in the ornamentation of kumiss vessels is to be found in the carving of horses' hoofs. Thus the bases of the tripod goblets (Fig. 90) are often carved in the shape of horses' hoofs. The mouthpiece of the kumiss churning vessel often has the form of a horse's hoof (Fig. 95*b*). The base of a wooden stand for a

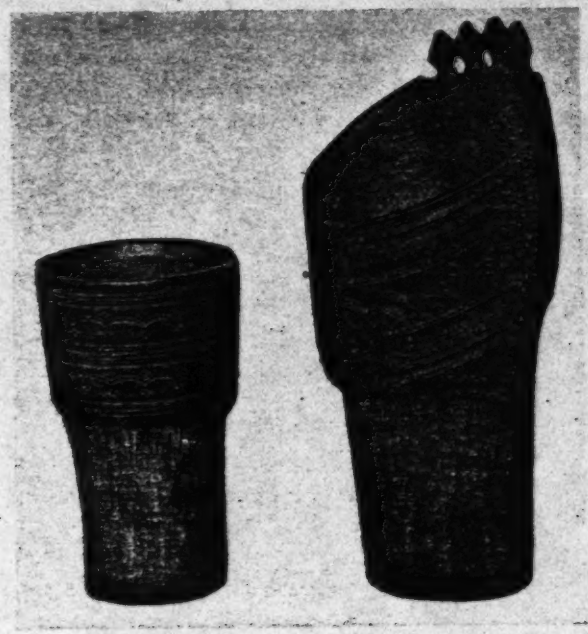

Fig. 95 *a* (70–9067), *b* (70–9266). Two Wooden Funnels for Kumiss Churns.

leather kumiss churn is also in the form of horses' hoofs (see Fig. 96). Even in conventionalized form we do not find the representation of an animal or human figure, not even that of a horse, which forms an object of their animal cult; but, judging from the Yakut names, we do meet with conventionalized representations of parts of the human body.

Thus Fig. 93*l* is called *tonohos oyū*, that is, vertebral ornament, and represents the spine or neck vertebra.

Fig. 93*o* is called *tyñyrax oyū*, which means nail ornament and represents human nails. Fig. 93*p*, is called *Tarbax oyū* which is finger

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

ornament, and is a conventionalization of the human finger. On birch-bark vessels we find the same motive embroidered in horsehair (see Fig. 98), and it is then called *tarhaxtŷ tigī*, which means finger embroidery. Among other birchbark techniques, Fig. 98*a–e* also shows the finger

Fig. 96 (70-9267). A Kumiss Churn on a Wooden Stand.

embroidery. It is likely that the nail and finger ornaments originated in work in pottery which is still preserved in a very primitive form.

Fig. 93*u* is an ornament copied by me from a Yakut clay pot, and is called *tyñyraxtax torduya*, which means nail-raising. But this pattern is

2: Jochelson E-5 (1884-1902) 1933 Yakut

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impressed in the soft clay not with the nail, but with a wooden stamp called *kūōs oyūlūr mas*, meaning a stick (*mas*) for the ornamentation of clay pots (*kūōs*). Fig. 93*t* is also stamped on clay pots and is called *būltāghir torduya*, which means "rounded raising," but this pattern is also found on kumiss vessels.

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There can also be found on kumiss vessels a pattern unillustrated called *tañalai oyū* (palate-ornament). It consists of small curves which represent the arch of the palate. It should be added that under this

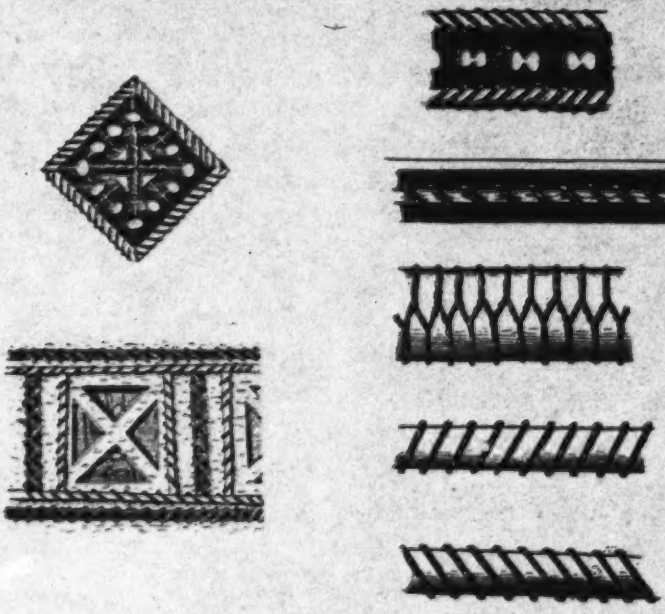

Fig. 98. Details of Embroidery and Sewing on Birchbark Vessels.

name (or *oncoho tañalai oyū*) is also known the decoration on small fur rugs made of alternating stripes of white and black horses' skins. (Fig. 97).

Figs. 93*q–s* are often seen engraved in or embroidered on kumiss vessels. They are called *sarbyn'n'ax oyū* (hanging ornament). This pattern is made with the concave face turned either downwards or upwards. In the first case it represents the hanging arch of the sky; in the second, a rope hung by its two ends. In a form similar to the latter it is also found on Western European Neolithic clay pots and was named *Schnurgehänge* by the German archaeologists, which name coincides with that of the Yakut.

39: Jochelson E-5 (1888-97) 1906 Yakut

415 323 531 It is likely that the "nail" and the "finger" ornaments originated from the Yakut pottery-work, which is still preserved in a very primitive form.[1]

532 No. 21 is an ornament copied by me from a Yakut clay pot, and is called *tyñyraxmăx torduya*, which means "nail-raising." But this pattern is impressed in the soft clay, not with the nail, but with a wooden stamp named *kūōs oyūlăr mas*, meaning "a stick [*mas*] for the ornamentation of clay pots [*kūōs*]."

No. 20 is also stamped on clay pots, and is called *bŭltăghir torduya*, which means "rounded raising," but this pattern is also found on kumiss vessels.

There can also be found on kumiss vessels a pattern, not here illustrated, called *tañalai oyū* ("palate-ornament"). It consists of small curves which represent the arch of the palate.

Nos. 17–19 are often seen engraved in or embroidered on kumiss vessels. They are called *sarbyn'n'ax oyū* ("hanging ornament"). This pattern is made with the concave face turned either downwards or upwards. In the first case it represents the hanging arch of the sky; in the second, a rope hung up by the two ends. In a form similar to the latter it is also found on the clay pots of the neolithic age of western Europe, and was named *Schnurgehänge* by the German archæologists, which name coincides with the Yakut one.

415 531 The decorative work on the kumiss goblets is usually made by engraving the patterns on the even surface of the vessel. But we also find patterns carved in relief; for instance, the net-ornament mentioned before is in relief on the goblets on Plate XXI. Some patterns made in relief (see Nos. 11, 12, Fig. 8) have a common name, *tomtorgo oyū*, which means simply "relief ornaments," and which refers only to the style of carving, and not to the meaning of the pattern.

[177] Nos. 26, 27, which include conventionalized plants, are called *usuor oyū*. The word *usuor* is borrowed from the Russian word *uzor* (in Polish *wzor*), which means "pattern." The patterns too are evidently borrowed from Russian decorative motives.

[1] A short description of Yakut pottery will be given in my work on the Koryak (Jesup Expedition Publications, Vol. VI).

43: Karutz--74 [3] E-2 (no date) 1925 Yakut
116, 323, 325

Ceramics is known, as well as fusing and forging of metals. They use bellows of butter bags, made of sheep skin.

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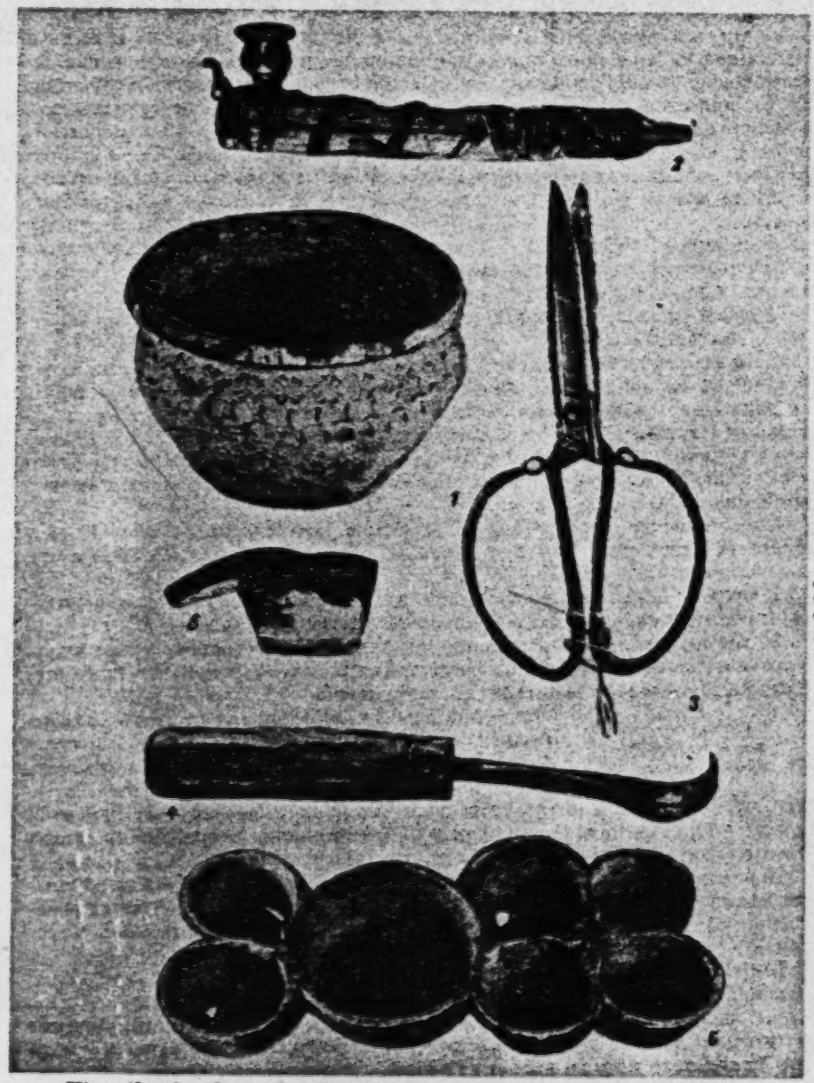

Utensils: 1—clay pots; 2—pipe; 3—scissors; 4—curved knife for making wooden vessels; 5—wooden pipe; 6—wooden holder for teacups.

articles from birchbark take first place. The tools used for wood- 372
working,—the axe, knife, drill, and so on—were improved and made more intricate under the influence of the Russians.

Wooden and birchbark utensils, crockery, furnishings and various other small objects were of great variety and were artistically and

skilfully made; the wooden crockery was usually decorated with carving, while the birchbark objects were decorated with horsehair designs. 322

Fur-dressing and tanning were very common. The materials were made into a great variety of different things—clothing, footwear, and headgear; carpets, underlays (usually made of horse- or cow-hide, often sewn together from pieces into a checkered mosaic), blankets (from horse-skin); the leather vessels were made in a variety of sizes, ranging from the enormous simiir' for kumys down to the tiny pail or tursuk; various parts of saddles, straps, nooses and so on. The actual working of the leather and fur was very primitive—the hide was smoked (in ancient times and even in the 17th century this was done in earth stoves), crumpled, smeared with oil or cream, and there was no true tanning. The manufacture of reindeer suede was evidently learnt from the Evenks and the Evens. 281 /

The Yakuts themselves did not make any cloth, either from animal wool or vegetable fiber—and only used what was imported. They did not know about spinning, nor how to roll felt. On the other hand, horsehair was widely employed; it was used for the ornamentation of birchbark and other objects, particularly for braiding different kinds of lassoes, cord, laces and nets, loops, fans to keep flies away, stuffing pillows for saddles and so on. The Yakuts also wove horsehair for decorative purposes. The individual hairs were twisted into a thread by hand on a bare knee, without using a spindle. 286 283 439 531

Blacksmithery was the only trade among the Yakuts which had long acquired commercial importance, although normally it was not a separate trade from agriculture. In the 17th century the Russians found it to be highly developed among the Yakuts. The iron was obtained from marsh ore, of which there was a great deal, particularly on the Vilyuy. The ore was mined along the rivers Botoma, Amga, Sola and others. It was first smelted in primitive blast furnaces. But at the beginning of the 20th century the Yakut smiths were already working with imported iron. They forged it into a variety of implements and utensils, weapons and so on. Apart from iron, the Yakut smiths worked low-grade silver, which in the 19th and 20th centuries was partly obtainable by melting down Russian coins. This silver was made into various ornaments, linings for belts, whips, horse harnessing. The equipment used in the smithies was fairly unsophisticated—furnaces worked with bellows (portable), anvils, hammer and tongs. 326 [316]

The fact that they engaged in ceramics singles out the Yakuts from the people around them. They evidently retained pottery as a relic of the Neolithic stage. Nevertheless, it was very primitive. To the dark, viscous clay they used to add powder ground from old fired pots and then mold the clay mixture diluted with water into the walls of the pot with their hands (without a wheel), using a stone to smooth them out (on the inside) and a trowel (on the outside). The pots were fired in the hearth. The pottery varied in size and the shapes and designs were crude. In the last few decades, Yakut ceramics have been replaced by Russian ones. 323 ●

Mammoth-ivory carving (Yakutiya is rich in mammoth skeletons), which was probably not begun before the 19th century, was not a common trade, although it was an interesting one. The ivory was carved into a variety of trinkets and small boxes. 321

These were the main types of production among the Yakuts prior to the Revolution. As a whole, the Yakut economy remained at a fairly low level of development, and by and large remained a subsistence economy. Nevertheless, the sale of homemade products acquired ever-greater importance towards the end of the 19th century. This was mainly the case 433 443